

Wyoming Information Update

Written by Emerson Smith

Wednesday, 22 August 2007 19:54 - Last Updated Thursday, 23 August 2007 21:36

Here's a further update from the Wyoming Wing MIO.

by Jeanne Stone-Hunter

Mission Information Officer

Wyoming Wing

WYOMING - Three members of the U.S. Civil Air Patrol's Wyoming Wing were killed Monday (Aug. 20) when the CAP Cessna 182 they were flying during a search mission crashed at about 4 p.m. approximately 30 miles west of Sheridan, Wyo., in the Burgess Canyon area of the Bighorn Mountains.

The CAP aircrew members were:

- Lt. Col. James Henderson, 59, of Cowley, Wyo., was a self-employed businessman and highly trained, seven-year veteran of the Civil Air Patrol. Henderson served as a search and rescue officer, counterdrug officer, flight release officer, mission check pilot, cadet orientation pilot, SAR/DR mission pilot, transport mission pilot and moral leadership instructor for the Wyoming Wing.
- Capt. Patricia Larson, 52, of Sheridan, Wyo., was a nurse who served as inspector general of the Wyoming Wing. Larson had been a member of the Civil Air Patrol for nearly four years.
- Sr. Mbr. James Meyer, 53, of Sheridan, Wyo., a pilot who served as the emergency services training officer and operations officer of the Cloud Peak Composite Squadron. He had been a member of the Civil Air Patrol for three and a half years and was also a veteran of the U.S. Army.

Wyoming Wing Commander Col. Stanley Skrabut expressed his deep sympathy for the member's families. "The entire Wyoming Wing has been devastated by the loss of three of our own. The wing and I send our condolences to the families of the victims and everyone whose lives have been touched by this horrible tragedy."

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Skrabut added: "The crew flew this mission with no hesitation because they wanted to help. In spite of what has happened, the members of the Wyoming Wing will continue to serve this nation by carrying out search and rescue missions whenever called upon because that's what we do."

The CAP crew was flying as part of the search for a 16-year-old fisherman who had been reported lost.

Shortly after 7 p.m., a U.S. Forest Service-contracted air-attack plane working forest fires was directing operations over a new fire when they called dispatch to report they had spotted a small airplane crashed in the burn area. Attempts to reach the crash site were hampered by steep terrain and the remote location. The search was called off Monday night before rescuers could reach the site because of the darkness.

On Tuesday, rescuers reached the crash site at 12:45 p.m. The aircraft was positively identified and the bodies of the victims were removed.

More than 50 members of Sheridan County Search and Rescue, a volunteer organization that works with the Sheridan County Sheriff's Department and searchers from Washakie, Johnson and Bighorn counties aided in both searches.

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The young fisherman was found in the Lick Creek area shortly after the crash by members of the Sheridan County Search and Rescue. He was reported to be in good condition and was reunited with his family.

The National Transportation Safety Board is investigating the cause of the crash.

Additional details concerning the accident will be released as soon as they become available.

NOTE: Please refer all media queries to the following CAP contacts:

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